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LIVING ORTHODOXY

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WHY IS THIS MAGAZINE LATE... AGAIN?

There really is a good reason, dear brethren. We had anticipated some disruption in publication schedules, but nothing like that which befell. Asked to make a mission trip to Uganda last winter, and knowing that it was imperative that I also make a trip to Haiti before the beginning of Great Lent, I tried very hard to plan ahead. Indeed, the first issues for the year 2000 were essentially ready for publication before I left for France, Greece, Kenya and Uganda... with open space left for articles following upon that trip and its immediate sequel (with only two Sundays back home between) to Haiti.

But, as they say, the best-laid plans of mice and men...! I returned home from Haiti just in time for the first week of Great Lent, during which essentially nothing gets done apart from the beautiful services of repentance. The early weeks were spent catching up with essential business matters. By the fourth week I was to all intents and purposes disabled with what seemed to be a particularly nasty case of the flu. I was still able to serve, and get in an hour or two a day at the Press tending to essential business, but nothing more. So the struggle continued, until the Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt, when I was unable to serve either in Atlanta as planned, or at home. By the next morning it was evident that the "flu" had to be something else. By evening I was hospitalized in Nashville, and diagnosed with *falciparum* malaria... the frequently deadly variety famed in films about Africa as "blackwater fever".

The source, however, was not Africa, but almost certainly Haiti. Cloroquine, taken as required, provides adequate protection against all varieties of malaria except *falciparum*, for which one must take the stronger mefloquine. On advice of the Center for Disease Control - reliant travel clinic I consulted, I

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took the appropriate medication while in Africa (where *falciparum* is common), then switched to cloroquine for the trip to Haiti. **DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE, SHOULD YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW BE PLANNING A TRIP TO HAITI!** The CDC has yet to acknowledge it, but other travel sources available on the world-wide web recognize the danger of *falciparum* in Haiti as "intermediate".

(continued on page 12)

THE LIVES OF THE THREE HOLY BISHOPS OF PERM

Whose Joint Commemoration the Holy Church Celebrates on the 29th of January

Just as the Orthodox Church of Greece established a joint celebration for its three great hierarchs, even though they lived at different times and reposed in different places, so does the ancient Church of Perm, emulating the Church of Greece and the reigning city of Moscow (which also celebrates several of its holy hierarchs on one day), commemorate and glorify the struggles of three of its hierarchs—Gerasimus, Pitirim and Jonah—on January 29th, the eve of the feast of the universal teachers. It glorifies them jointly because, in succession one after another, they continued the apostolic labors of Saint Stephen, the great enlightener of Perm, and because their holy relics have rested within a single shrine in the cathedral of that city. Their hierarchal struggles extended over more than half a century, ending for two of them in martyrdom. As ones set at the head of their flock, the bishops of Perm, exalted in their manner of life and wisdom, enjoyed the universal respect of their contemporaries, and despite the remoteness of their diocese were often summoned to Moscow and took no small part in all matters of importance to the Church. Yet despite this, there is very little we can say about their life and struggles. We know neither their origin nor lineage, neither the time nor the place of their monastic tonsure, neither the details of the administration of their diocese nor their private prayer life.

Of the first of them, Saint Gerasimus, contemporary chroniclers give no indication as to when he was consecrated a bishop and when he reposed, although the same chroniclers often mention the deeds and events of the most ordinary and unremarkable sort. The reason for the chroniclers' incomprehensible omission is unknown, unless one assumes that it was that the place of the activities and struggles of the holy hierarchs was so far removed from the centers of literary endeavor, or the fact that the language of the region in which they toiled was different, or that civil disorder prevailed then throughout Russia, or that the condition of Perm was particularly disastrous, for it was

almost constantly assailed by its own people and others. Pillage and mayhem committed by the river-pirates of Novgorod and Vyatka, by the Tartars and Vogulichi, by Asyka and Shemyaka, were more noteworthy and attracted the attention of the chroniclers more than the pastoral labors and struggles of humble bishops who strove, in the words of the Gospel, to hide their virtues.

The relics of these three holy hierarchs, as we have said, rested in a single shrine in the Church of the Annunciation in Ustvym, which was their cathedral. Above their reliquary hung an icon with a silver repoussé covering, depicting the saints full stature, with the following inscription: "In the year 7115 [i.e., 1607], in the month of June, on the 8th day, during the reign of the great sovereign Tsar & Grand Prince Basil Ivanovich, Autocrat of All Russia, while His Holiness Hermogenes was Patriarch of Moscow, this sacred image of the three holy hierarchs Gerasimus, Pitirim & Jonah was painted at their command, unto the glory of the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—, by the humble bishop Joasaph of Vologda & Great Perm, and set above the graves of these great wonderworkers, Gerasimus, Pitirim & Jonah." The memory of the holy hierarchs was reverently honored on January 29th, in accordance with the joint decision of the holy Patriarch Hermogenes and Tsar Basil Ivanovich Shuisky. Up until the Revolution, crowds of pilgrims from all the ends of Russia would descend upon Ustvym for this feast. In times past, there was a special church dedicated to these three saints, but in 1749, on orders from Bishop Barlaam of Ustiug, a chapel was added on the north side of the Cathedral of the Annunciation, which on January 29th, 1764, was dedicated to all saints. In this chapel, somewhat to the right of the royal doors, the reliquary of the saints was set.

Bishop Isaacius, the successor to Saint Stephen, who attended the council in Moscow which consecrated the archbishop of Novgorod and dealt with the metropolitan of Lithuania,

went into retirement in March of 1416, and did not return to Ustvym. The newly converted flock, left without archpastoral oversight, was quickly and easily drawn back into their previous errors and began to permit themselves to live disorderly lives, the moreso, on the one hand, in that the fanatical heathen shamans were glad of the opportunity to sow their tares, seeing no threat or hindrance to their propaganda, and on the other hand, in that the wild Vogulichy did not hesitate to use force to compel the new converts to return to paganism. "The sheep are going mad, the wolves

are falling upon them; without a shepherd there is no-one to herd them, to scare and drive away the wolves...", Epiphanius the Wise writes with sadness ("The Lamentation of the Land of Perm over the Death of Saint Stephen"). The state of affairs being such, the successor of Isaacius, a pastor zealous in his duty, had to expend much labor and care, had to bear much unpleasantness and tribulations, to endure attacks and offenses at the hands of enemies who, taking advantage of the remoteness of the place from the supreme administration, acted with immunity.

The Holy Hieromartyr Gerasimus

Whose Memory of the Holy Church Celebrates on the 24th of January

The successor of Isaacius was the blessed Gerasimus, but from whence he hailed, when and where he was tonsured a monk, when and where he was consecrated a bishop, and when he arrived in Perm, are all unknown. Ancient local tradition only says that he was a man of holy life, who zealously uprooted the tares which had grown up in the field of Christ, and strove to plant the Orthodox Faith ever deeper in the hearts of the people, for this purpose sparing neither his own labors and health, so that in 1429, Metropolitan Photius was able to say of Perm with satisfaction: "Now that land doth in purity worship God according to the law of Christ, in Orthodox fashion" (Sermon on the Descent of the Holy Spirit).

In 1438, we see the blessed Gerasimus at the council in Moscow, at which Isidore, the betrayer of Orthodoxy, was condemned. Later, in 1441, he was again summoned there for the adoption of a conciliar decision for the council of the Russian bishops to appoint their own metropolitan. This shows how contemporaries valued the opinion of the bishop of Perm, and the respect in which he was held. Without a doubt, the zealous archpastor mediated before the Great Prince for his flock on this occasion, asking for financial subsidies and relief from taxation.

Truly, through his tireless efforts and paternal care, everything in Perm was soon brought into good order: trade began to flourish, the industry of the people intensified, and safety was ensured by peaceful relations with all the surrounding tribes. The people became prosperous, increased their productivity, grew wealthy, and bestowed generous gifts upon the monasteries and churches of God. Their religious sensibilities, nurtured by the clergy who were guided by the counsel and directives of the archpastor, were everywhere given expression, and were demonstrated by the fact that almost no populous village remained where a churches had not been built by the zeal of the inhabitants. The blessed pastor rejoiced, seeing the peace and prosperity of his flock; and not sparing his labors or health, he continued unceasingly to labor to make them steadfast. Yet it was difficult to maintain peace and safety in a land so far from the protection of the Great Prince and vulnerable on every side to the attacks of enemies who were accustomed to consider it easy prey. In the last years of the holy hierarch Gerasimus' life, the condition of Perm again became very difficult: it simultaneously had to defend itself against divers enemies far superior to it in might, who assailed it from two different directions. The most dangerous of these were the Vogulichy, whose predations

were often directed at the settlements above Vychegod, and who constantly tried to harm the Zyryans' trade and industry. For several years they did not harry the Zyryans, for they were occupied with domestic disorders and disputes amongst themselves; but when the disputes and civil strife ended with the death of many of the wild chieftains, and one of them, Asyka, became the mighty and dread overlord of all the Vogulichi, both settled and nomadic, Perm found him to be an implacable foe, who inflicted horrors upon them over the course of half a century, and was for the Zyryans a scourge and a figure of terror. Not so terrifying were the other enemies: the river-pirates of Novgorod and Vyatka who, unlike the Vogulichi, harbored no tribal animosity toward the Zyryans and were motivated only by thirst for loot; yet they were often no less cruel than the Vogulichi, and caused great harm to the welfare of the land. The Novgorodians harried the settlements of lower Vychegod, while the Vyatkans plundered along the Vug and Sysol. Under these lamentable circumstances, the general despondency and despair of the populace became so intense that the people gave no thought to mounting a defense, and saved themselves by fleeing into the forest, leaving their homes at the mercy of the enemy, who thus rarely encountered opposition anywhere.

As a caring father, the blessed pastor brought all his influence and activity to bear for the defense of the oppressed. Not sparing his own means, and subjecting himself to danger, he traveled Perm from one end to the other, encouraging his sheep, which were being ravaged by bloodthirsty wolves, and everywhere showing himself to be like a guardian angel. Moved by his pleas and exhortation, the Novgorodians and Vyatkans returned to the inhabitants all that they had stolen from them, and out of respect for the venerable elder made rich donations to the churches and monasteries of Perm.

The blessed Gerasimus, who hitherto had extended his care over his flock alone, then selflessly decided, at the risk of his own life, to go to the lands of the cruel and savage Vogulichi. Despite the brutality of their chieftain, Asyka, the pleas and persuasions of the holy hierarch had an effect upon the wild tribesmen, so that they withdrew to their own territory.

The zealous archpastor then worked to restore peace and order to the villages and settlements which had suffered at the hands of the savage foe: he would go to even the most remote place, if he heard that it was mired in helpless poverty; and he would see to all the needs of its inhabitants, comforting some, helping others, providing funds for some, refusing naught to any; and by such efforts he became known to all as a benefactor of the people.

The distress his soul suffered and the ailments of old age undermined his health, yet even when sick he refused to set aside his pastoral duties and went to survey the villages and churches closest to his cathedral town. On the return journey, as he was already approaching his home, "in a meadow by the River Ustvym, nigh unto the town of Ustvym, not far from the cathedral, the holy father was strangled by one of his own retinue. The saint undeservedly received his end on January 24th." Tradition has it that Saint Gerasimus was strangled with his own omophorion by a Vogulich servant whom he had taken in to train, with the purpose of making him a preacher of the Orthodox Faith for his wild fellow tribesmen. In all likelihood the savage slew his benefactor at the instigation of those to whom the abased paganism was dear. The sad news of the death of the archpastor spread rapidly to the surrounding settlements and brought sorrow to the hearts of their inhabitants. From far and wide the people came in crowds to the cathedral town to pay their last respects to their benefactor. As all wept and lamented, the body of the holy hieromartyr was committed to the ground in the Cathedral of the Annunciation.

The Holy Hieromartyr Pitirim

Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 19th of August

When word reached Moscow of the martyrdom of the blessed Gerasimus, the man consecrated as his successor was Pitirim, the archimandrite of the Chudov Monastery, who was as renowned for his piety and monastic struggles as he was for his intelligence and education, and there were few others of his like in Moscow at that time. In his introduction to the life of the holy hierarch Alexis of Moscow, the monk Pachomius says: "I have taken other material from the most reliable writings of Archimandrite Pitirim, who was later bishop of Perm. He wrote a short life of the holy hierarch and composed a canon in praise of him, having heard true accounts of his life and miracles. This bishop and martyr not only suffered for the Faith at the hands of the infidel, but also endured much ill treatment at the hands of a prince who considered himself a believer, but who later came to be considered worse than an infidel because he defiled his hands with the blood of his brother." This is an obvious reference to Shemyaka, who long rampaged through the region of the Dvina.

Where Saint Pitirim was born, where he was tonsured into monasticism, when and by whom he was consecrated a bishop, are all unknown. Chosen to be the archpastor for a land beset by terrible misfortunes, from the very beginning of his episcopal administration Pitirim directed his particular attention to the good estate of the Church and the establishment of general order, which had been violated by the hostilities of the neighboring peoples. Thus, his first task on arriving in Ustvym was the restoration of amicable relations with them, and especially with the Vogulichi and the Vyatka freebooters, who, to the general dismay of the Zyryans, had willfully settled on Permian territory along the Rivers Sysol and Luga. With this purpose, he sent them letters exhorting them to cease waging war and plundering the Zyryans, who had always solemnly observed the conditions of peace and had never altered the guarantees made by their governors. But what effect could pastoral letters and exhortation have

on unrestrained, self-willed men and crude pagans? Not only were they unsuccessful, but they so betrayed the weakness of the material forces of the governors of Perm as to inspire in the looters the thought that they could pillage without threat of reprisal. All throughout the tenure of Saint Pitirim, the raids made against the Zyryans by the Vogulichi and Vyatkans were practically incessant. Asyka, taking advantage of the disputes of the Russian princes over the throne of the Great Prince, launched terrible assaults against the Christian settlements, looted their possessions and slew the people, who gave up all thought of defending themselves and preserving their property, and tried to save their lives by fleeing into the forests.

A zealous guardian of his flock, tireless in his concern for its good, Pitirim employed all means possible to mitigate these evils, even if only to a certain extent, and to ease the burden of the people's distress. And for this purpose he did not spare his own supplies and property or those belonging to the monasteries. Since Asyka, certain that he was safe from reprisals, became more and more audacious, and began to extend his raids and plundering beyond the boundaries of Perm, causing no little harm to the Russian inhabitants of the Dvina region, in 1445 the Novgorodian rulers of the lands on the Baga and the Dvina, Basil Svoezemtsev and Michael Yakovl', leading a force of 3,000 fighting men with Zyryans as guides, proceeded to the Urals and there captured a multitude of Yugry tribesmen (Ostyako-vogulichi). Though they had allayed the suspicions of the military commanders with the promise of complete submission, the crafty tribesmen routed the forces of Svoezemtsev in a sudden attack, but soon after this, through the prudent tactics of the commanders and the bravery of their army, which was enraged by the perfidy of the Vogulichi, their bands were routed, and Asyka, their brutal leader himself, was captured and forced to accompany his captors back to Russian territory. The crafty Vogulich, bowing to necessity, concealed his mal-

ice and vowed by all the mighty spirits of his own religion to maintain to his death amicable relations toward Perm, and no longer to threaten Christians; but these forced oaths and humiliating captivity only served to intensify in him a feeling of hatred for the Zyryans. When he was set at liberty, he betook himself to Pechera, awaiting only the withdrawal of the Novgorodians before resuming his devastating attacks with yet greater wrath. The blessed Pitirim tried to help the refugees, but by his pleas and exhortations was only able to persuade the Vyatkans finally to withdraw their bands from Perm and promise that they would no longer raid the Zyryans.

In 1447, he was summoned by the Great Prince to Moscow to help compose a conciliar epistle to Shemyaka, who had violated the terms of the treaty and was again wreaking havoc in the Dvina region. It may be assumed that the epistle sent by the council to Shemyaka, even though signed by all the senior clergy, was actually composed by Pitirim, not only in that he was the most skilled author and enjoyed the favor of the Great Prince, but also in that he had suffered no little oppression at the hands of Shemyaka.

Though he was separated from his flock while in Moscow, the blessed Pitirim did not cease to care for his spiritual sheep: he personally interceded with the Great Prince for the defense of Perm against the attacks of its enemies; but Basil Vasilievich, despite all his respect for the holy hierarch, despite his real desire to fulfill his requests, had to confine himself to easing the burden of taxation on the suffering, while members of his family provided Pitirim with various contributions and gifts for the Zyryans. Sent off by the Great Prince with honor, the holy hierarch hastened to depart from Moscow for his own far distant diocese, to gladden his flock with the sovereign's gifts. But his return to Ustvym was not joyful. With dismay he learned there that during his absence Asyka had broken his vow and again, raiding the Zyryan settlements closest to Pechera, had borne their defenseless inhabitants off into captivity and withdrawn with his booty to the upper reaches of the Pechera. Deprived of housing and property, the people fled to Ustvym in multi-

tudes, lamenting the loss, some of fathers and mothers, others of wives and children. The blessed Pitirim, sympathizing with them completely over the misfortunes which had befallen them, strove to console them with his paternal discourse, reassured them of the help and financial support of the Great Prince, and distributed among the devastated people all that he had brought from Moscow, to ease, if only a little, their sad lot.

In 1448, while in the midst of these labors and pastoral concerns for his flock, the holy hierarch was again summoned to Moscow to take part in the consecration of the primate of the Church of Russia. There had been no metropolitan in Moscow for eight years, owing to the difficulties caused by the princes of Galicia, who coveted the position of Great Prince. Bishops Ephraim of Rostov, Barlaam of Kolomna, Abraamius of Suzdal' and Pitirim of Perm arrived in the capital city; others sent proxies, declaring their consent to the choice of the council. According to the unanimous desire of all, Bishop Jonah of Ryazan' was elected and installed as Metropolitan of Moscow. The presence of the holy hierarch Pitirim at this council, despite the remoteness of his diocese, indicates the respect in which his contemporaries held him, especially the Great Prince, who would not agree to proceed with so great a matter without him. It also demonstrates the zeal of the holy hierarch himself, and his concern for the good of the Church and the whole country, for the saint chose not merely to send a proxy document, but considered it his duty to attend the council personally, despite the length of the journey and his absence from his flock.

Accompanying Saint Pitirim partway on his return journey, the Great Prince made rich donations to the Zyryan monasteries and hermitages, was not parsimonious in allocating alms for the flock of Perm, which had suffered so greatly at the hands of its neighbors, and again reduced the taxes and tribute moneys expected of the people.

To the great joy of the Zyryans, after 1448 their enemies, the Vogulichy, did not disturb them for seven years, so that the zealous pastor then had the complete freedom to carry out his teaching

duty, to root more deeply in the hearts of his spiritual sheep the dogmas of the Faith and the rules of Christian morality. Frequently making the rounds of his vast diocese and visiting its most remote regions, Udora and Pechera, that he himself might see how his children were living in the Faith, he lovingly cared for their enlightenment, taught in their homes, preached in their churches, and frequently conversed with the people under the open sky, explaining aloud to them the laws of Faith and piety. While journeying through Pechera, he, like Saint Stephen, overcame hindrances, endured privations, ignored dangers, and spread his apostolic zeal to such an extent that he succeeded in converting to Christianity the wild Vogulichi who, with the neighboring baptized Zyryans, lived a nomadic existence among the tributary rivers of Pechera. Yet this winning of new children for the Church of Christ would later bring down upon Perm terrible calamities and cost the life of the holy preacher himself.

From 1448 to 1455, the Vogulichi launched no assaults upon Perm. During this interval, the people prudently took advantage of the tax exemptions granted them by the Great Prince, and with the help of their good archpastor, they soon forgot the rapacity and malice of Asyka. Everywhere the people praised their bishop, benefactor and father, and with him hoped and thought that they were finally delivered from their dread and cruel enemies, the Vogulichi, that the new converts from among that tribe would be able to restrain their fellow tribesmen from raiding and plundering and would serve as mediators and peace-makers between them. But the expectations of the Zyryans were disappointed. Word of the conversion to Christianity of the Vogulichi closest to Perm inspired in Asyka and those close to him a rabid rage.

Nursing a personal grudge against Saint Pitirim, the Vogulich chieftain prepared to deal a cruel blow to the Zyryans, penetrating to the very heart of the Perm region, Ustvym, to destroy the bishop, its father and defender. He did not rush to carry out his intention, but little by little amassed the supplies necessary for the long march, and made

his preparations with the greatest possible secrecy, so as not to compromise the success of his undertaking by its becoming prematurely known. In the summer of 1455, when all was in readiness, he suddenly called together all the Vogulich chiefs and their roving bands and armed them with bows and arrows. They traveled down the River Vychegda on rafts, trying to reach Ustvym as rapidly as they could. Without stopping anywhere along the way, and preventing the folk who lived by the riverbanks from warning the saint of the approach of the enemy, Asyka soon arrived at Ustvym and halted in sight of it, about seven miles from the confluence of the Vyma and the Vychegda. There he waited a while for the Vyatka freebooters, to whom he had sent messengers to summon them to rapine and plunder. And the Vyatkans did not delay in responding to his summons.

Joining forces with the Vyatkans, Asyka sought a convenient opportunity to attack Ustvym. First of all he desired to find out what was happening in Ustvym, whether they were aware of his arrival, whether they had fortified the city and the episcopal residence, and whether the bishop intended to go anywhere.

It was Sunday. Early in the morning, one of the inhabitants of Ustvym set out on personal business, sailing in a little boat up the Vychegda, and unexpectedly came upon the camp of the Vogulichi. He was captured, and Asyka tortured him to learn what sort of forces guarded the city and the episcopal residence. The Zyryan, among other things, told him that on that very day Pitirim was going to celebrate a service of supplication on a promontory near the mouth of the Vyma, and that no-one was aware that the Vogulichi were nearby. Taking advantage of these circumstances, Asyka tried to reach Ustvym while Pitirim was at the promontory and in the midst of his sermon, for then, through the rapidity of the attack, he hoped to strike both shepherd and flock most easily. To deceive the vigilance of Pitirim and take him the more readily into custody, Asyka ordered his warriors to cover their rafts with newly hewn spruce branches. Thus disguised, from a distance the rafts looked

like floating trees which had been washed away by the flooding and rush of the river.

On Sundays in Ustvym, everyone, old and young, attended church. After the Liturgy, the holy hierarch, the clergy and people, bearing crosses and icons, went in procession to the promontory—a broad field formed at the confluence of the Rivers Vymya and Vycheгда. The ecclesiastical procession, at the head of which the holy hierarch Pitirim, an elderly, hoary-headed man, walked bearing the life-creating cross, was accompanied by the chanting of sacred psalms. When it reached its appointed destination it came to a halt; and then supplications were offered up. The people surrounded their beloved bishop, and with him prayed to God with compunction. Suddenly, they noticed the masses of trees which extended for a great distance along the length of the river and were floating directly toward the promontory. This could not be a coincidence or a result of a storm, and caused general consternation.

The saint, considering the implications of this sight, realized that his end was at hand, and he took thought and explained what was happening. The people were thrown into confusion and knew not what to do. Then the holy hierarch, turning in the direction of Ustvym, knelt down and, lifting up his hands, prayed to God, thrice making the sign of the holy Cross over the monastery, the churches and the city; then he blessed the people and said: "My beloved brethren and children! It hath pleased the Lord God to give me over to the merciless Vogulichi to be put to death, and the hour of my departure from this transitory life to that which is everlasting hath now arrived. I am ready to die for my Lord God. It is better for me to die alone, than for all of you to perish. Unto you, my children, I leave peace and blessing. Love God; love one another; and love also your enemies. By my death may the Lord save you from wrath and anger. Hold fast to the Orthodox Faith; keep the commandments; learn piety; love the Church as ye love yourselves. Honor the sovereign; submit to those in authority, for they are from God; obey the shepherds of your souls, and the Lord will bless you. Peace and blessing be

upon you, beloved children! Be not downcast, neither grieve for my sake. Depart quickly from me, lest some misfortune also overtake you; for I would not hide or flee, but fain would undergo martyrdom and taste of death for Christ God and the Holy Orthodox Faith." The enemy was closing in, but the flock, listening to their holy father, shed bitter tears and would not move from that place, even though Saint Pitirim urged them to leave. For because the holy one was exceeding merciful and meek, teaching and instructing them with humility, they were all prepared to defend him. But when the hordes of the Vogulichi poured out onto the river-bank and advanced upon the spot where Pitirim stood, the people scattered in every direction, leaving their arch-pastor alone.

At that time, the saint stood praying to God. But the merciless Vogulichi and hard-hearted Vyatkans were in nowise moved to pity by the sight of the saint praying to God, prepared to give himself over voluntarily to torture and to receive death; and, advancing upon him in force, with wrath they laid hold of the saint and one by one began to beat him. The holy father only exhorted Asyka and those with him. But the humble exhortations of the godly elder could not touch souls hardened by malice. The bishop of Perm was barbarically slain by Asyka, and his holy body, abused and reviled by the bloodthirsty mob, was left lying on the promontory. "Thus," says the chronicler, "did Saint Pitirim the bishop, the wonderworker of Ustvym, voluntarily suffer for Christ, meeting his end at the hands of the godless Vogulichi and Vyatkans, and receiving reward and a crown from the Judge of the hierarchal contest, the Master and Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, on the 19th day of August, in the year 1455."

Having committed such a villainous act, Asyka immediately withdrew and did not go on to the town of Ustvym, either because he was afraid he would encounter strong opposition, or because he was well satisfied with the death of the hierarch he had hated so bitterly. He satisfied himself with taking into captivity only those who lived along the river-banks.

The ecclesiastical and civil authorities hastened to send word to Moscow of what had transpired. For the space of forty days before an answer came from the capital, the body of the holy hierarch lay in the clearing which was the site of his martyrdom, yet despite the burning heat of summer, it remained untouched by corruption. Not only those who lived near at hand, but also those from the most remote areas of the region of Perm, came in multitudes to venerate the incorrupt hierarch.

When reply was received from Moscow, the relics of the martyr were buried in Ustvyim's Cathedral of the Holy Annunciation with great reverence and honor, to the sound of universal lamentation and weeping. He was interred next to the holy hierarch Gerasimus, and shortly, while those who knew him in life were still alive, the date of his martyrdom began to be commemorated with reverence and prayers were directed to him as a favorite of God. One typicon, written in 1522, has an entry under the 19th of August: "On this day Bishop Pitirim of Perm was slain by the ungodly Vogulichy."

The Holy Hierarch Jonah

Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 6th of June

From the lives of the holy hierarchs Stephen, Gerasimus and Pitirim, it is evident just how difficult and dangerous the situation of the young Church of Perm was. Over the course of many years, it was almost continually subjected to plunder and destruction by its rapacious neighbors and, due to its remoteness from Moscow and to unfortunate political circumstances, it received no defense or aid from the Great Prince. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first to succeed Saint Stephen, Bishop Isaacius, was forced to abandon his diocese and go into retirement, and that the ministry of those who followed him, Saints Gerasimus and Pitirim, ended in martyrdom. What could Jonah, the new bishop of Perm, expect, who was ordained by Saint Jonah, Metropolitan of Moscow, in 1455, shortly after the murder of the holy Pitirim? The same privations and toils, dangers and misfortunes confronted him as did his predecessors, and he needed great self-denial and reliance upon the will of God to decide to set out for his appointed see.

No one knows where the chosen one of God was born and raised, where he received the monastic tonsure and prepared for his exalted ministry, or whether he hesitated to occupy a cathedral stained by the blood of his predecessors. Thankfully for the new hierarch and his flock, the terrible time of civil strife had passed: Shemyaka, the

most dangerous foe of Great Prince Basil the Dark, was already in the grave, and his other enemies trembled at the sovereign's words, for with every passing day he felt his strength increase and began to act with greater boldness and decisiveness, and to demand that everyone treat his princely authority with respect and awe. Thus, the bishop of Perm was able to rest easy over his safety.

Furthermore, for the enemies of Perm a just reward for their brigandage and looting was being prepared. While sending Bishop Jonah to Perm, the Great Prince promised him protection and defense, both against the Vyatkans and the Vogulichy, having resolved to humble and punish them.

Since the Vyatkans were causing great disturbance in the northern regions, and had even taken part in the murder of Saint Pitirim, a mighty expedition from Moscow in the years 1458-1459 punished them, made subject many of their cities, brought all the lands of the Vyatkans into dependence upon Moscow, and forced them to pay tribute. Thenceforth, the Vyatkan bands, cowed by the awesome might of Moscow, did not dare to attack Perm and subject it to plunder and slaughter.

It remained only to humble the other, more obdurate and bloodthirsty foe: the Vogulichy, the enemies of the Zyryans. The Great Prince, finding it inconvenient, due to the great distance of Perm

from Moscow, to guard it with his own forces, entrusted to commanders in Ustiug and Novgorod the task of protecting Perm with military might at the first request of the bishop of Perm; and thus he established the peace and safety of the region for time to come.

Bishop Jonah prudently took advantage of the military aid offered by Moscow, and in a short time managed to set the land in good order, to restore peace in society and increase prosperity among the people. His tireless concern for the good of the Church, his readiness to act for the betterment of the moral and economic standards of his flock, without thought of personal gain, and his paternal charity toward everyone, won over the hearts of all the people, who revered him as both father and benefactor. The Zyryans did not know how and in what way to thank their archpastor for this: they only rejoiced and asked God to grant him many years, years of happiness for them.

No less honor and respect did the holy hierarch enjoy with the Great Prince and the Metropolitan, who undertook no important action without seeking his advice and participation. Thus, on December 12th, 1459, with the rest of the hierarchs of Russia, he signed an exhortation to the bishops of Lithuania, urging them to maintain loyalty to Orthodoxy and not to accept Gregory, the disciple of Isidore. In 1461, after the repose of Metropolitan Jonah, it was Bishop Jonah of Perm who declared to the Council the will of the late Primate that Archbishop Theodosius (Byval'tsev) of Rostov be elevated as his successor, which clearly shows how much love and trust Metropolitan Jonah had for his namesake.

But the principal and most important struggle of Saint Jonah was the conversion to Christ of the Greater Perm region, which he to a great extent accomplished. Greater Perm, vast and untamed, lay along the Rivers Kama and Chusovaya, in the upper reaches of Vychevda and Pechera, from whence the Ostyaks and the Vogulichi raided the settlements of the new Christians.

Before 1462, the natives of this region stubbornly and blindly held to the shamanistic religion of their ancestors, worshipping Voipelya and a

golden goddess. Zealous for the glory of God, and feeling compassion for those brethren of his Zyryan flock who were still sunk in crude paganism, the blessed Jonah, having brought peace to his spiritual children, vowed to minister unto them and be their enlightener. In the beginning, like Saint Stephen, he struggled long with the prejudices of the inveterate idolaters, endured insults and privations, and was subjected to danger and persecution; but when he put to shame their most stubborn shamans in debates about religion, the holy hierarch clearly showed the people the impotence of paganism and managed to persuade a prince of Perm to convert to the Holy Faith in his town of Urosa, giving him the name Michael at baptism. This prince was the most influential of the leaders of Perm, and armed with his authority, the holy hierarch courageously conducted a campaign (1462-1463) to destroy the idols, hew down the trees worshipped by the people, reduce images carved of wood to ashes, and enlighten all the inhabitants of Perm with Holy Baptism.

To firmly establish the Orthodox Faith in the hearts of the newly converted, he summoned from Ustvyim trustworthy and experienced priests. In the places where the temples of the false deities had once stood, and to which the people were accustomed to resort for prayer, he built churches and organized schools for the instruction of children.

The most active and ardent helpers of the blessed Jonah in this apostolic task were the monks of the Holy Trinity-Pechera Hermitage, since they were the closest neighbors to Cherdynya, the main town of Perm. (After the repose of Saint Jonah, for a long time they functioned as parish priests for the Christians living along the River Pechera.) At the same time, in Cherdynya itself, the holy hierarch founded the Monastery of St. John the Theologian, to better root Christianity in the hearts of the newly enlightened. The people of Ustiug and Novgorod, who earlier learned than others learned of the success of the holy hierarch's preaching, hastened to send him gifts and donations toward the construction and adornment of churches for the newly converted.

In 1468, the peace of Perm was again broken by the Kazan' Tartars, who captured Vyatka, advanced upon the borders of Perm, and began to plunder the region. But the following year, the Tartars were driven off by forces from Ustiug and concluded a treaty with the Great Prince of Moscow. The blessed Jonah, as a caring steward and solicitous father, did not merely stand by while his flock was subjected to these tribulations: on the contrary, not sparing the strength of his elderly body or his material means, he tried to help the suffering and to restore peace and order everywhere.

As though sensing the approach of his demise, during his last years he strove particularly to root piety among the simple people and to eradicate heathen customs. For this purpose, he almost constantly traveled from one end of his vast diocese to the other, increased the number of his

clergy, and in himself provided a living example of sincere piety

1470 arrived, the fifteenth year of his episcopate. The aged elder began to sense within a weakening of his physical powers. Yet even though he fell sick more frequently, he refused to leave off his customary activity until his final illness brought him low. He calmly and peacefully reposed in Ustvym, on June 6th, 1470; and his holy body was interred in his cathedral, next to the relics of the other saintly hierarchs, Gerasimus and Pitirim, wonderworkers of Ustvym, on the left side of the church, having been escorted thither with funeral hymnody and honor.

And there the three saints rested, performing miracles and granting divers healings unto those who approached them with faith, unto the glory of Christ our God.

Translated from the Russian by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen, from Historic Accounts of the Lives of the Holy Ascetics of the Diocese of Vologda: Those Glorified by the Whole Church & Those Locally Venerated (Vologda: Press of V. A. Gudkov-Byelyakov, 1880), pp. 326-346. Copyright © 1999. All rights reserved by the translator.

(continued from page 2)

Fortunately, diagnosis and treatment were prompt (it is unlikely, due to the peculiar nature of the disease, that a correct diagnosis could have been made any earlier), but the severity of the attack kept me hospitalized until Thursday in Holy Week. Thanks be to God, I was able to share in the final services of Holy Week via baby monitor, to receive the Holy Mysteries at the Paschal Liturgy, to serve Vespers throughout Bright Week, and finally once again to serve the Holy Liturgy for Bright Saturday.

But that didn't get any magazines ready for printing! It has taken until now to recover sufficiently, both personally and operationally for the Press, to be able to undertake the preparation of this issue. God willing, the next will follow immediately upon my return from another mission trip to Haiti in the latter half of September... and subsequent issues on a monthly schedule until *Living Orthodoxy* is once again back on time. We beg your forgiveness and understanding!

By the grace of God, the kindness of St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville and the attending

physicians in reducing by 50% the billings, and the generosity of the faithful, all the direct costs of the hospitalization have been paid. However, the indirect costs in the staggering loss of productive time are incalculable. With Bishop Gabriel's blessing, we invite you as you may be able and willing to contribute to offsetting this loss, in order that the Press may more rapidly recover its productivity.

On a much happier note... we delight to share with our friends and readers something of the continuing life and growth of the community of the faithful here. Recently Fr. John Townsend from St. Mary of Egypt Parish in Atlanta joined us for the baptisms of our three youngest members: Matthew and Elisabeth's newborn son Maxim, and Gabriela Sinks and her newborn son Andrew. As this issue goes to press, we prepare for the wedding, at St. Mary of Egypt Church in Atlanta, of our youngest daughter, Rachel Marie, and the reader Zachary Rose. Rejoice with us!

— Fr. Gregory

**VOYAGE TO THE END OF THE EARTH:
CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, BUKASA ISLAND, UGANDA**

Somewhere near the edge of the known world, a determined pilgrim might approach the parish of the Annunciation on Bukasa Island. A sharp-eyed traveler scanning the skyline over Lake Victoria would be startled by a most unexpected interruption on the distant horizon — the stone tower of a new church under construction, ready for the mounting of a dome and cross.

This parish is almost certainly the most difficult of our parishes to reach and likewise one of the most improbable in its very existence. The story reaches back into the early part of this century, when several African protestant clergymen were led by their prayers and their readings to understand that they had been introduced only into a deteriorated shadow of the true Church of our Lord Jesus, and to set forth
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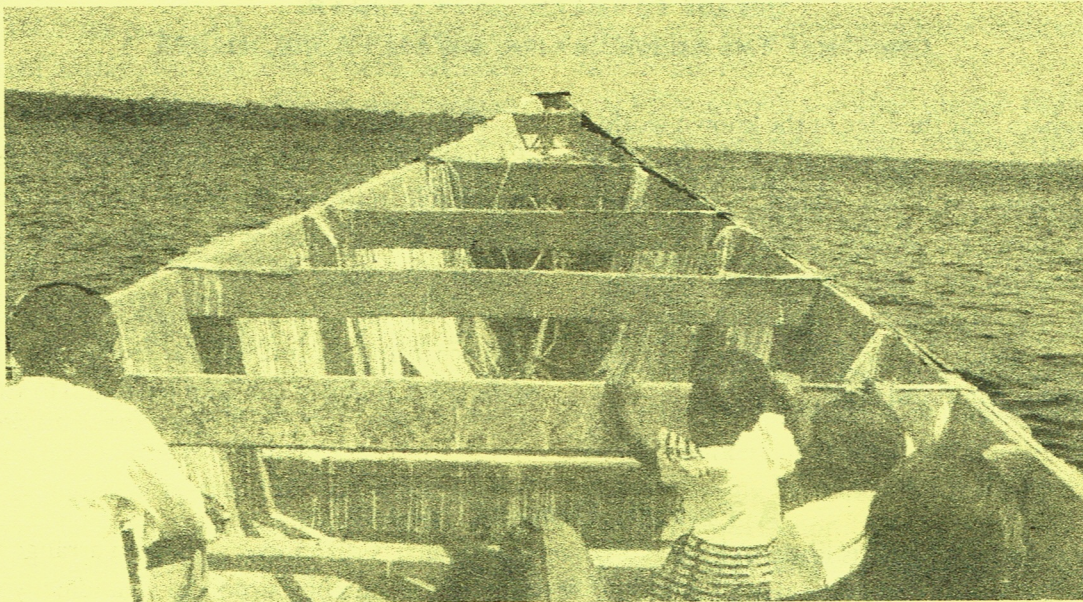
A TRIP TO BUKASA ISLAND

A trip to Bukasa Island is likely to begin fairly conventionally: Call a travel agent and arrange for air passage to East Africa. Expect to pay \$3,000-\$4,000 round trip to Entebbe airport in Uganda, if you just call up and take what they offer you. For a little more adventure and a great deal less money (I was able to keep air fare, ground transit and hotel costs under \$2500)... work hard to get the best fare you can to Nairobi, Kenya (the air travel hub of East Africa). While there, you will have the opportunity to visit with Fr. James Waruinge, the principal clergyman in Kenya of our sister church under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili, in Greece. From Nairobi, take the Royal Coach for Kampala. Once-grand seats, only 23 of them, are spaciouly arranged in a large coach... which travels over roads worse than any American is likely ever to have seen (but not as bad as Haiti). The trip is long (12 hours) and hot and dusty... but it is Africa, not just the interior of yet another airplane. A surprisingly decent lunch is included in the very low fare (under \$30US). For normal human beings, nothing less than three days (better, four) will suffice for the trip: fly first to somewhere in Europe, spend at least an overnight recovering, then take a daytime flight to Nairobi (it is *farther* from Paris to Nairobi than from Nashville to Paris), spend another night in Nairobi, take the day bus to Kampala and spend the night in Kampala.

And that's the end of the conventional part. There is no way to communicate quickly with Fr. Christopher, as there are neither phones nor electricity on Bukasa, hence also no fax machines or e-mail. Communication is so slow and unreliable that, even though Fr. Christopher knew I was coming sometime early in the year, and I immediately sent him a letter when reservations were confirmed, I had no way of knowing whether he had received it or knew when I would arrive. One *might* succeed in arriving on Bukasa without Fr. Christopher's assistance... but not without a large number of very interesting experiences.

Despite affirmations to the contrary in numerous travel sources, there is no "public transit" of any kind to Bukasa. The lake ferry of which I read in one source stopped operating a
(continued on page 14)





number of years ago... and even when it did run, no one ever knew just when it would run. Providentially, my letter had indeed reached Fr. Christopher... and he was waiting for me in Kampala when I got there. We had a most pleasant reunion, and I passed a pleasant night at the hotel, after we had agreed upon a mid-afternoon departure for Bukasa the next day.

So much for plans. We arrived at the harbor about 4:00... and I suddenly woke up to the startling realization that I had been harboring some unclarified expectations of my own... somehow thinking of a "boat trip to Bukasa" in terms reminiscent of *African Queen*, or perhaps even of somebody's battered-up old motorboat. Think again... think canoe, albeit big and motorized. There were several of them riding the gentle surf at the harbor, about 50 feet out in the water off a sandy landing area. But we weren't quite ready to go... our boat hadn't come in yet, and in any case there was shopping to do in the harbor "shopping center"... a cluster of perhaps a hundred shacks, in which one could buy almost anything imaginable. Fr. Christopher did the shopping, and I was free to wander around... and wander around.

When the boat finally came in, it had yet to be loaded... perhaps a ton or two of supplies bound for Bukasa. Bags of grain, bundles of purchases, tanks of gas... all carried out through the surf by the loaders and placed into the boat (I later found

out a full-size Massey-Ferguson farm tractor had been moved to the island the same way... those guys are *strong!*). Then it came the people's turn... on the shoulders of the loaders.

We finally left just before nightfall for a voyage which normally takes 5-6 hours for a loaded vessel, sometimes as little as four for an empty one. Happily, it was a pleasant evening... neither hot nor cold, and no rain. Very happily... for, a couple of hours out, in pitch blackness, the engine sputtered to a stop. Many nights have been spent drifting on the waters of Lake Victoria that way, many of them under far less pleasant conditions. That night, it required only a couple of hours of tinkering by flashlight to get the engine running again... but by that time, of course, the boat had been drifting aimlessly (and lightlessly) for a long time. So it was that I got to witness the wonder of native seamen at work. Fr. Christopher and two of the young men, all navigators, stood up near the prow of the boat, looked around at the blackness on the horizon, overhead at the stars (fortunately, no mist that night) — and abruptly three arms shot out, all in the same direction, and that's the way we went. About 2 AM, it became apparent we were coming in close to an island... Bukasa at last.

Waiting on shore was the island's "taxi"... a Massey Ferguson tractor with attached trailer owned by the parish (one of only five known motorized vehicles on the island: another tractor, a

on a determined search to become one with that true Church, the holy Orthodox Church. Their path was far from easy, and only partially successful... but it led them to baptism and ordination under the omophorion of the patriarch of Alexandria. Today, large numbers of their spiritual successors populate native African Orthodox churches in Kenya, Uganda, and throughout East Africa.

One of their descendants, a native of Bukasa, came to the United States to study. She met, and ultimately married, a Greek Canadian, who had come to understand the impossibility of living a truly Orthodox life in the midst of the ecumenist and modernist activities and corruptions of the church in which he had grown up, and so came to seek the spiritual shelter of the Russian Orthodox
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(A Trip to Bukasa Island, concluded)

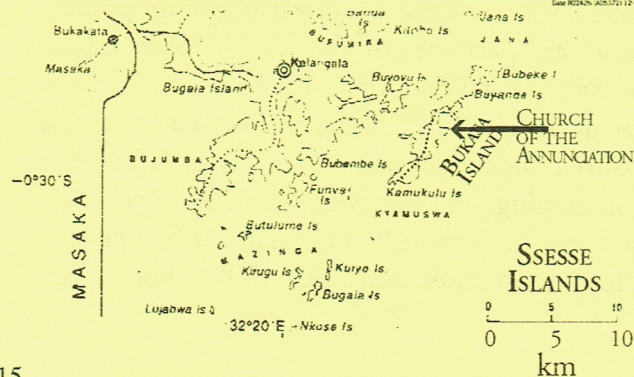
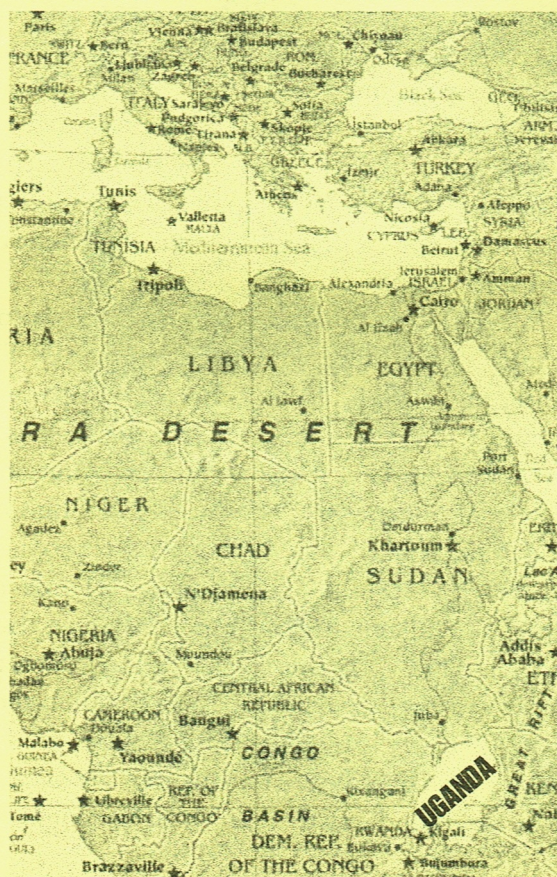
motorbike which belongs to the government, a Land Rover which belongs to the island's resident rich man, and a walk-behind pavement roller!). All the people and all the goods were transferred from the big boat to a smaller boat and then to the sand at waterside, and finally to the trailer before we began chugging up the road across the island, stopping innumerable times at road crossings and trailheads to discharge people and bundles.

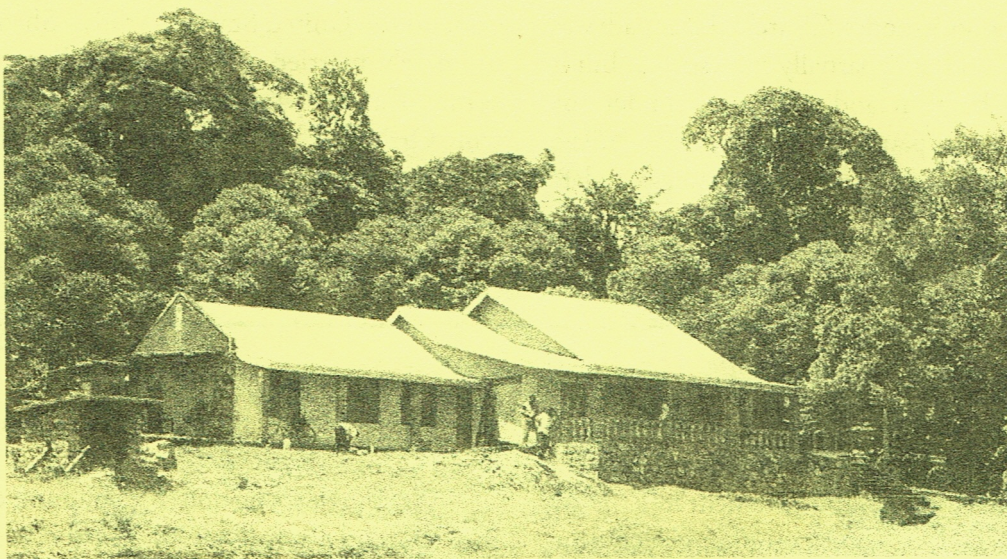
And finally... to what was to be my home for the next two weeks, a most pleas-

ant guest house built by Fr. Christopher and the parishioners.

The trip was long and difficult, and exhilarating. The end was well worth the effort it took, and would have been so for any of many different reasons. I would urge any of our readers whose circumstances permit such a visit to undertake it... just don't short-change yourself: this is *not* a weekend jaunt! Allow at least three weeks, better a month or even longer. Such an experience could well be "the trip of a lifetime".

WHERE ON EARTH IS BUKASA ISLAND?





WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS BUKASA?

A description of Bukasa Island reads in many ways like a description of Paradise. Although only 20 degrees south of the equator, in the very heart of tropical Africa, the climate is as gentle as could be imagined. Temperatures below 70 degrees have everyone complaining of the cold... and above 80 degrees everyone complains of the heat. Both are quite rare, night or day. Rainfalls are seasonal, and can be quite heavy, but the ground is very porous and dries quickly. The island rises a few hundred feet above Lake Victoria, itself at an elevation of about 1000 feet above sea level. It is heavily vegetated, a mixture of open grasslands and deep forests. Wildlife is abundant, most conspicuously birds, each one more flamboyant and noisy than its predecessor. Monkeys far outnumber people (the island has a population of about 2000 on about 20 square miles). Upon arrival I asked about possible wildlife dangers, and Fr. Christopher told me they were few: an occasional alligator in swampy areas (not very pleasant anyway); in the past, hippopotami, "but I think we ate them all". I asked about the infamous black mamba snake, and was assured "he's a lot smarter than you... he hears you coming, and he's gone long before you have any idea he is there." The island is free of electricity, telephones, and all the things that go with

them. There are a few dirt roads, but they are for the most part innocent of any but foot traffic. Until recently, the only communication with the mainland was by lake boat, but there is an airstrip under construction which now offers the possibility of rapid evacuation in case of medical emergency. Surprisingly, the island is on the prospectus of some European touring agencies, and the guesthouse maintained by Fr. Christopher and the parish (above) has frequent short-term visitors. All of them (to judge by the comments in the guest book) have enjoyed their stays as much as I did mine)... but unfortunately none of them were Orthodox.

When I arrived, there was such a visitor present, who had been reading all Fr. Christopher's spiritual books for some weeks and continued to do so after my departure. He is a native of Sierra Leone, exiled from his homeland by the continuing civil unrest. I asked him how he came to find Bukasa, and his answer was certainly revealing. He had been visiting friends in Kampala, and told them he needed someplace very quiet and apart from the world in which to pray and meditate for a time. They told him they knew just the place, and sent him to Fr. Christopher's guesthouse on Bukasa. He assured me he had found exactly that which he sought.

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Church Outside Russia. The story of the early years of our church's mission on Bukasa is to be found in *Living Orthodoxy* vol. XI #3 (No. 63). Those who wish to delve further may wish to read the *National Geographic* article written by Gerasimos and Sarah Kambites even before the establishment of the mission, "Return to Uganda" (July 1980).

The expulsion of the Kambites family at gunpoint only a few years after the mission's establishment would have spelled its end, had they not done their work so well. Instead, Sarah's brother found the means to come to North America for training and ordination to the priesthood, and returned to Bukasa to continue the struggle. Over the years, there has been much interest amongst our faithful, and no small amount of support... but our brothers and sisters on Bukasa have continued in their isolation. Since the departure of the Kambites family, no clergyman of our church had ever visited the parish, and only a couple of intrepid laymen.



FR. CHRISTOPHER & MATUSHKA MARIA

I had the privilege to be somewhat involved with the mission on Bukasa from its earliest days, helping to raise funds and, on one occasion, to pester and cajole and complain until a helpful soul in the Ugandan embassy in Washington finally secured the release of a container of gifts for the mission from the clutches of greedy customs officials in Kampala. Years later, I had the joy of meeting Fr. Christopher and serving with him at the services for the glorification of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco.

Last year, I was delighted to be asked by Fr. Dcn. David James, on behalf of the Orthodox Benevolent Fund, if I would be willing to undertake a mission visit to Bukasa. With the blessing of Bishop Gabriel, plans were laid for the trip.

The mechanics of getting to Bukasa did not trouble me, but I nevertheless left Europe for Africa with considerable apprehension... that I might *not* find what I hoped to find: a healthy, devout, seriously Orthodox parish. After all, no "outside" clergyman had ever been within thousands of miles of the mission, and even with the best of intentions very strange aberrations might arise in such isolation. Thanks be to God, I found what we had all hoped for, and had the great pleasure of spending nearly two weeks with our brethren in this most remote place, serving with Fr. Christopher for two Sunday Liturgies, as well as the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord.

Over the years, a congregation of about 60 souls has grown up, either having been received from the new-calendrist church or converted from paganism or protestantism. For many years the faithful of Bukasa have worshipped in a temporary structure, in which I must say I found myself very much at home: lit at night only by candles and kerosene, open to the outside through cracks between every pair of boards, the earth floor covered with freshly-cut grass, the chapel is clearly every bit as much the temple and throne of God as any richly-adorned cathedral.

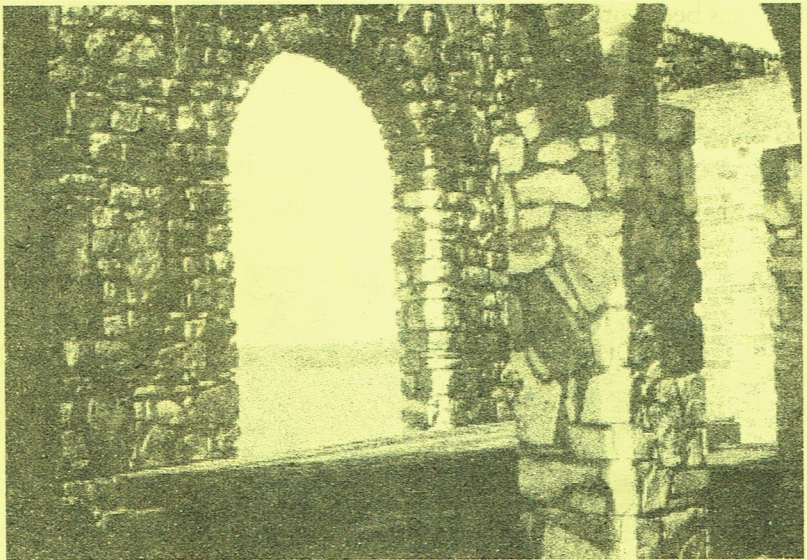
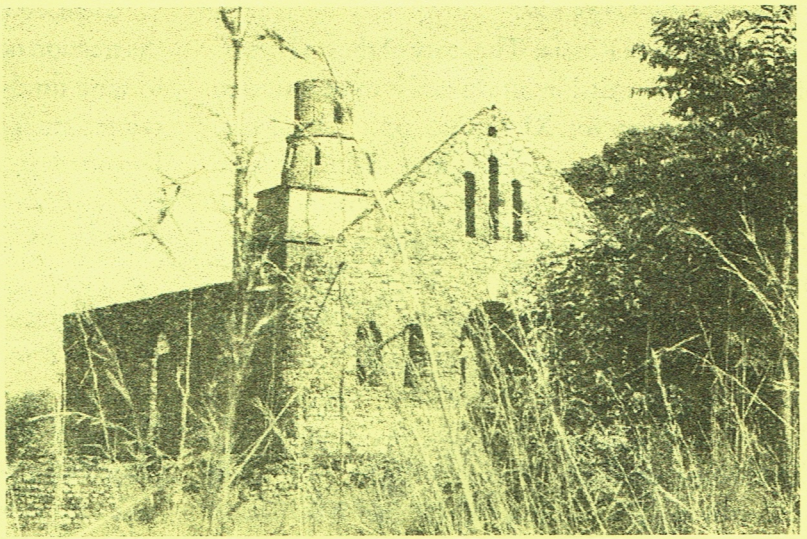
But only step outside, and some 100 yards away rises an awesome stone temple under construction. How is this happening on an island so far removed from any source of supply, with no operational machinery other than a farm tractor? The answer is simple: lots of loving hand labor.

Indeed, almost everything on Bukasa is done by hand...and a great deal *is* being done. The parish

LET'S FINISH BUILDING THIS CHURCH!

How can it be that such a magnificent stone building arises from the rocky soil of Bukasa? The vision was Fr. Christopher's, and much of the labor his. The people of Bukasa had never built with stone, so Fr. Christopher obtained books, and read, and learned, and built. Stones were hauled from all over the island (and indeed from other islands as well, to meet special needs). Cement had to be purchased on the mainland and hauled by boat and tractor and hand. There is no gravel on Bukasa for making concrete... so rocks were chipped by hand to create the gravel. Fr. Christopher showed me "Aunt Florence's stone" in the south wall of the nave... a hollowed-out stone, one of many his sister Florence had chipped to make gravel. Fr. Christopher's health and age no longer permit him to haul the stones into place, but he can still direct others. Builders who have contracted for the parish's help with materials for a new secondary school on Bukasa (the teenagers must currently go to Bugala or to the mainland to boarding schools for high school) have agreed to help with the wooden roof structure and the cre-

ation and placing of the dome. Workers who could live on Bukasa and share in the life and work of the parish for a time would be greatly helpful... but a relatively modest amount of money is also need for the completion of the church. Most of it will go into cement to finish the stonework on the east wall, and expert help for the construction of the roof and dome. How much? Fr. Christopher believes the modest sum of \$10,000 US should suffice to complete the building. That's less than \$100 from each parish in the United States alone!



Please do your part to help raise the funds, and send contributions to:
The Orthodox Benevolent Fund,
PO Box 203,
Fly Creek NY 13337,
earmarked
"Annunciation Bukasa Building Fund".

(continued from page 17)

operates a communal brickworks to help underwrite its life and work. A gasoline-powered brickmaker was once used... but there are no brickmaker maintenance shops on Bukasa, so now the work is done in the traditional way, with the mud mixed by footpower, the bricks sundried and brushfire cured. Walking about the island (it takes about a half-day to walk from the church to the south end and back, a little less to the north end), parishioner's homes are readily identifiable by the brick.

Life on Bukasa is lived today much as it has been lived for centuries... the people of the Ssesse Islands are fisherfolk, and everything else rotates around

driven, but most are paddled. Moderate garden plots, plantain patches and coffee groves are worked entirely by hand labor. Chainsaws were once used, removing the giant forest trees at a staggering rate. They are now outlawed, and all timber cutting on the island is done with two-man crosscut saws and axes. The cut timber is converted to planks which can be hand-carried from the forests in pit-saws: a log laid on a trestle, with one man above and one man below driving a rip-saw.

Against such a backdrop do our brethren live and worship and witness to the Faith. The task is well begun: the island is already 3% Orthodox! Ours is the only Church on the island with either a resident



the fishing. At every good harbor on the island is found a fishing village, occupied by a wildly variable number of people, depending on the present location of the fish. Some fishing vessels are motor-

clergyman or regular place of worship. When completed (and it will be completed... Fr. Christopher and I served together, with some of the parishioners, a molieben to St. Xenia, in the midst of the rubble of



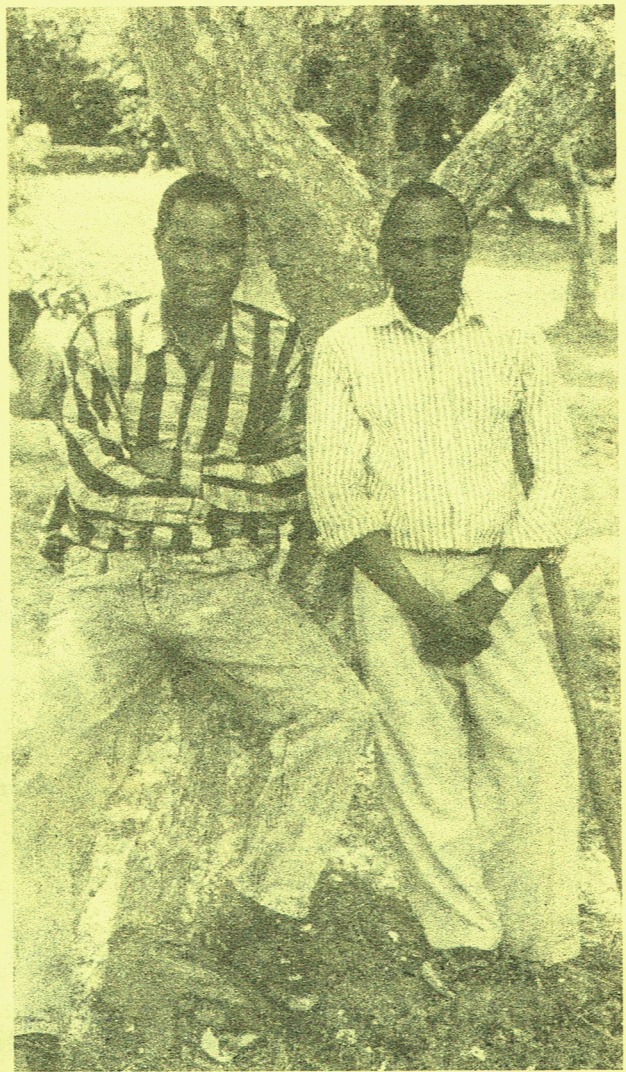
stonework within the new church), the stone temple will be a shining witness to the Faith visible to the horizon over Lake Victoria.

Our liturgies together were occasions for much joy, knowing that even (perhaps especially) in “darkest Africa” there shines the light of the Faith. The thirst for Truth is great amongst our brethren there... so great that Bishop Ambrose, of our sister church in Greece, has responsibility in Congo, in Zaire, and in Kenya, for more than 10,000 souls in well over 100 parishes. Unfortunately, I was unable to visit with the faithful from a village on the Kenyan border, who have begged for a parish and priest of their own... they are a hard two days’ travel from Bukasa. Further, shortly before I began to write this, there arrived an appeal from a Bible Study Group in Kenya for our Church to send them missionaries and instructors. What is to be our response?

Our brothers and sisters in Africa live and labor under conditions for us unimaginable. Starvation and drought and disease and political violence have been as much a part of their lives as BigMacs and fudge sundaes are of the pampered lives we lead. Nonetheless, they would be much the worse off if we were able by some stroke of magic to make their lives like ours. We must do what we can to aid them... spiritually, materially, medically. At the same time, we must learn from them many things we have largely lost.

I returned from Uganda with a heart at once joyful and burdened. The joy, of course, was to have been able to share in the life of the Faith with these good and peaceful people. The burden was, and remains, the awareness that we have done so little, and must do so much, for the spread of the Light of Truth throughout the world, as well as for the material assistance of brothers and sisters less fortunate than we. I pray that this visit will be followed by many others, as well as by an outpouring of prayers and assistance for our brethren on Bukasa, and for the mission work of the Church throughout Africa.

For assistance in planning a pilgrimage to Bukasa, please do not hesitate to ask our help. Please direct all contributions to The Orthodox Benevolent Fund, PO Box 203, Fly Creek NY 13337.



Ioannis (on the right) lives a forty-five minute walk (for me) from the church. He doesn’t get to every service... but then, he has only one good leg and a stick on which to make the trip. Nevertheless, he always makes it with a smile, and is a gracious host in his home. His wife Elisabeth suffered for many months after her fourth Caesarian childbirth with a surgical incision which would not close, but bled continuously. Under life conditions on Bukasa, this would certainly have proven fatal in short order. But the Lord does not abandon his children: returning from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land (provided by the Orthodox Benevolent Fund), Fr. Christopher brought her oil from the lamp and earth from the floor of the Sepulchre of Our Lord. Elisabeth began to fast and pray, anointing the wound with the oil and earth. Within a very short time the wound was healed. Glory be to God!

ECONOMY

BY HIERODEACON THEODOSIUS

In the Akathist to the Mother of God we read: "All angel-kind was amazed at the great act of Thine incarnation; for they saw the inaccessible God as a man accessible to all, abiding with us..."¹ In the act of incarnation, the inaccessible God became a man, accessible to all. This was the divine economy. The great Byzantine theologian of the fourteenth century, Nicholas Cabasilas, explains:

"Though men were triply separated from God – by nature, by sin, and by death – yet the Saviour made them to attain to Him perfectly and to be immediately united to Him by successively removing all obstacles. The first barrier He removed by partaking of manhood, the second by being put to death on the cross. As for the final barrier, the tyranny of death, He eliminated it completely from our nature by rising again."²

This was an act of God's love, "a mode of economic condescension"³ God became man in order to give man the chance to become deified and to find eternal life and happiness with Him. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16).

The "divine economy", therefore, in this sense, is God's descent into the world, motivated by love, where He built Himself a house – that is, the womb of the Mother of God, and thus made possible man's salvation.

But this "self-emptying and abasement"⁴ of the Son of God in the act of incarnation is not the subject of this talk. The economy that I want to talk about is that arrangement of man's affairs in relation to the Church – that "mode of economic condescension" – exercised by the Church also out of love, and, also, to facilitate man's salvation.

It will be easier to look at this idea of economy from three distinct points of view - to see how it is put into practice, for what reasons, and with what aims and results. Then we will be able to draw some conclusions as to what exactly economy is.

RELATIONS WITH NON-ORTHODOX

My first area for observing the operation of economy is in the relations of the Orthodox with the non-Orthodox. But I must quickly point out that economy is not something new. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read of the centurion Cornelius, a just and God-fearing man who, together with other Gentiles, received the gifts of the Holy Spirit before he was baptized (Acts 10:44). In his commentary on this event, St. John Chrysostom says, "observe God's providential management".⁵ This was an exception to the established order.

Further in Acts we read that the apostle Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy "because of the Jews which were in those quarters" (Acts 16:3). Timothy's father was a Gentile, and Timothy, therefore, was uncircumcised. But to satisfy the Jewish law and to be more acceptable to the Jews in his ministry among them, St. Paul decided that Timothy should undergo circumcision, rather than allow it to cause an obstacle. This, Timothy's circumcision, was an exception to the established order.

In both these scriptural examples of economy, exceptions were made in particular cases and particular circumstances.

In the 37th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (held in 680), we actually have the legislation of a general rule of economy. The fathers of this council laid down that, in a particular situation, when a bishop is unable to go to his see because of its occupation by "barbarians" or "atheists", then that bishop does not have to observe the letter of the law by making his way to his diocese through hell and high water. But, he has the right, as a condescension and in mitigation of the strict rule, to administer his diocese from outside. This canon prescribes a solution based on economy, until such time as the normal, strict, canonical position can be observed.

(A) RECOGNITION OF HETERODOX HOLY ORDERS

In the last century, the question arose of the recognition of the validity of the orders of the Anglican Church.

With regard to the attitude of the Orthodox Church to the sacraments of the heterodox, the position is clear and unambiguous. It says, "According to the teaching of the Church, every heretic is outside the Church, and outside the Church there can be neither true Christian baptism nor true Christian sacrifice, and in general, no true holy mysteries."⁶

This view is based on the teaching of St. Cyprian of Carthage, which is restated in the canons: "those who have been baptized or ordained by [heretics] cannot be either of the faithful or of the clergy" (68th Apostolic canon); and, "no one can be baptized outside the Catholic Church, there being but one baptism and this being existent only in the Catholic Church" (1st canon of the Council of Carthage).⁷

From the strict canonical point of view, therefore, any ordination performed outside the Orthodox Church is invalid and ineffective. The question arises, however, about the nature of this "ordination" when a person seeks to join the Orthodox Church. Can this "ordination" be accepted? Does the person need to be re-ordained, or more accurately, ordained (since ordination can be performed only once, and he has had no real ordination)?

I shall talk about the actual reception of these people into the Orthodox Church later. But as far as the acceptance of their ordination is concerned — on being received, the Church takes the view that, if received by a bishop, such a person's empty sacrament of ordination (received in his heretical church) "receives the complement of grace only through that sacrament which united [him] with Holy Church (chrismation or penance)".⁸ (Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky)

Other writers, when discussing this topic of the acceptance of Anglican orders, always speak of such acceptance being an economy. For example, in an article in *The Greek Orthodox Theological*

Review, on the validity of Anglican orders, it is stated:

"The orders of clergymen joining the Orthodox Church from the Anglican Communion may be recognized 'by economy' so long as the competent functionaries of each particular Orthodox Church accepting him, think that there are reasons for the application of such 'economy'."⁹

The point of Metropolitan Anthony's article is that after reception into Orthodoxy, the question as to any supposed exercise of economy with respect to the person's ordination is irrelevant, provided there exists "the outward form of the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, and orders".¹⁰ Because the person's ordination had been filled up with grace overflowing from the grace received in the sacrament of reception.

In this, Metropolitan Anthony is echoing the view of the great, nineteenth century Russian lay theologian, Alexei Khomiakov, who said:

"Reconciliation [by baptism or penance] renovates the Sacraments or completes them, giving a full and Orthodox meaning to the rite that before was insufficient or heterodox, and the repetition of the preceding Sacraments is virtually contained in the rite or fact of reconciliation."¹¹

In another place, he expresses the very same idea that the person coming to Orthodoxy has not received the grace of baptism. He receives this grace "either by the repetition of the Rite [of baptism] or by the prayers of reconciliation [i.e. penance] giving power to a rite otherwise powerless".¹²

In all this discussion of accepting heterodox ordination by economy, one also finds the statement that economy will not be applied in the following cases: [1] "heresiarch and originators of schism", and [2] "those who have mutilated the outward act of the Sacraments where that act has been laid down canonically by tradition".¹³

There can be no room whatsoever for any consideration of the possibility of the exercise of economy in these two cases. The exercise of economy is a preliminary matter unavoidably connected with the question of the person's mode of reception into the Orthodox Church.

(B) RECEPTION OF CONVERTS

As I have already stated, the Church's position with regard to the sacraments of other churches is clear. She acknowledges no sacraments as valid except those of the Orthodox Church. On that premise, therefore, the Church received converts either by baptism or by chrismation (and sometimes by confession and communion). I will not go into the long history of the divergent practices, not only as concerns to the rite of reception but also the divergent practices of the Greek and Russian Churches.

To receive by baptism was an application of the strict rule: The canons, in as many words, demand that heretics coming to the Orthodox Church from other faiths be baptized. Anything less than baptism was an application of economy because economy was resorted to when the effect of what was done by the Church was to lessen the strictness as demanded by the canon. What is interesting, however, in this particular area, is to read the comments of textbook writers when they describe the effect of such a practice of economy on the previous heretical rites.

A typical example, although the author is not a scholar, and his work is not a textbook of canon law, is the statement of Chrysostomos Strandman in "Orthodox Baptism and Economy". "The Baptism administered by heretics secures no remission of sin, regeneration, or illumination, even if the correct form is used... The form is of divine institution, and if it has been correctly performed, even though it is of itself nothing but a wetting of the body, the authority of the Church can validate it... the one missing element is the Grace of the Holy Spirit."¹⁴ The mistake here is to say, as do many others, that if a person is not received by baptism but by economy, then it follows that the exercise of economy makes the previous (heretical) baptism "valid".

This conclusion is stated in the same terms by the well-known author and bishop of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Callistos Ware. In his book, *Eustratios Argenti*, Callistos Ware states as follows:

"[The Church] is, therefore, in a full sense the steward and sovereign administrator of the

sacraments; and it falls within the scope of her stewardship and economy to make valid – if she so thinks fit – sacraments administered by non-Orthodox, although such sacraments are no sacraments if considered in themselves and apart from the Orthodox Church. Because a person's baptism is accepted as valid – or rather made valid by economy – when he becomes Orthodox, it does not, therefore, follow that his Baptism was valid before he became Orthodox. The use of economy implies no recognition of the validity of non-Orthodox sacraments per se; it is something that concerns only the sacraments of those entering the Orthodox Church."¹⁵

No less a person than the great canonist and commentator, Bishop Nikodim Milash, was deceived by the same false logic. In his commentary on the seventh canon of the Second Ecumenical Council, he writes with regard to the practice of economy:

"The Orthodox Church recognizes as valid and salvific the baptism of any Christian group which is outside her confines, whether heretical or schismatic, but whose baptism is performed correctly in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."¹⁶

The false logic in this conclusion lies in the mistaken understanding of the effect of economy in these cases. Economy does not make valid what was never valid. "It cannot pronounce that to be a sacrament which dogma denies to be a sacrament."¹⁷ The truth lies in the statement of Khomiakov which I have already quoted: The grace of baptism is received in the rite of reconciliation, which I might add, involves the performance of a mystery, and which gives "power to a rite otherwise powerless." Chrysostomos Strandman corrects himself a little further in his text when he says: "When the Church accepts the convert and adopts, as it were, this correct but empty form as her own, she supplies at the same time, the sin-remitting, regeneration power of the Spirit."¹⁸ In other words, the Church supplies the deficiency of the heretical baptism by filling it with the grace of the rite (mystery) of reception. It is simply wrong to speak of any supposed

“validity” of the heretical baptism. As Bishop Gregory succinctly puts it, “When any heretic or schismatic is accepted into the Church without rebaptism, that does not signify recognition of the validity of the heretical rite or sacrament. It simply means that he receives the grace of baptism by another rite.”¹⁹

Some of you may be aware of the spiritual re-creations that many people have suffered (and suffer) because they were not received into the Orthodox Church by baptism. There was the well-known case in England in the late 60s. The facts, briefly, were that some people had been received into the Moscow Patriarchate by economy. They were subsequently received into the Synod Abroad by economy; namely, by confession and communion, two distinct mysteries of the Church. After some time they became troubled that they had never received Orthodox baptism, and so, after a petition to the bishop, they were baptized by a second economy, in order to quiet their spiritually troubled souls.

Objectively, on the facts of this case and without any regard to the persons involved, it is necessary to say that there was absolutely no need for the subsequent baptism after having been received by economy. Although there was no external performance of the rite of baptism, and there was no triple immersion, nevertheless, these people had in fact received the grace of baptism when they had been received into the synod by economy. The grace that they received at that time in the mysteries of confession and communion (the rites of reception) overflowed, as it were, and filled up what was lacking. These people had already been united to the Church. Their subsequent baptism is superfluous – they have already received the grace of baptism; the only thing lacking was the 3-fold immersion. However, if presentation of these facts fails to persuade them and quiet their troubled thoughts, then, of course, a second economy is permitted.

Let us pass now to the second area where economy is “said to be” exercised.

2. DIVORCE

At the present time, the Church will dissolve a legally contracted marriage on any of the following grounds:

1. apostasy from Orthodoxy
2. adultery and unnatural vices
3. incapacity for marital cohabitation
4. affliction by leprosy or syphilis
5. unknown absence
6. jail sentence, with deprivation of rights
7. infringement upon the life and health of the other spouse and children
8. incest or prostitution of spouse
9. entering into new marriage
10. serious, incurable mental sickness
11. intentional desertion

These grounds for divorce were established by the Council of the Russian Church held in 1917-18 – the same council that restored the Patriarchate.

It is interesting that in the preamble to this decision, the Council states that “marriage should be indissoluble. ‘Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder’ (Matt. 19:6).” But immediately after that, it is added; “Dissolution of marriage is permitted only as a concession to human weakness and out of concern for the parties’ salvation” – a clear statement of economy.

The Council, it can be seen, lays down the strict principle – marriage is indissoluble – but out of consideration for human weakness, will permit divorce on certain grounds. It is instructive to investigate the basis for these grounds and attempt to reconcile this apparent infringement of the evangelical law.

The New Testament teaching is quite straightforward: “Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.” These words of our Lord assert the absolute indissolubility of the first lawful marriage, so that the very concept of a second marriage is alien to the Christian ideal. “By its nature, there is one marriage, just as there is one birth and one death” – St. Gregory of Nyssa said to his sister St. Macrina, who had refused to remarry

on the death of her husband. The fathers of the Church write that second marriages do not accord with the Christian ideal of marriage, not only because they violate the monogamy divinely established in paradise, but because, according to Christian teaching, death is not a complete annihilation and, therefore, does not destroy the marriage.²⁰ Consequently, even on the death of one of the spouses, the second marriage by the survivor is a violation of the first marriage by its being a secret adultery.

"A second [marriage] is but a specious adultery... Anyone who deprives himself of his first wife, even if she be dead, is a hidden adulterer. In breaking the bond of flesh with flesh, which union was formed for the intercourse of the race, he is resisting the hand of God, inasmuch as, in the beginning, God made one man and one woman." So said Athenagoras of Athens (+180).²¹

Tertullian writes: "A woman, after the death of her husband, is bound no less firmly, but even more so, not to marry another husband... Indeed, she prays for his soul and asks that he may, while waiting, find rest."²² Further, he says that a second marriage would be an insult to the deceased's memory, and he calls it "a form of adultery."²³ So also Justin the Martyr: "According to our Teacher, ...they are sinners who contract a second marriage, even though it be in accord with the human law..."²⁴

Against this, however, must be measured the apostolic injunction of St. Paul, twice repeated in his first Epistle to the Corinthians: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry" (1 Cor. 7:8-9); and "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:39).

St. John Chrysostom in his commentaries on this Epistle, passes over these words as self-explanatory, except that he adds, "He (that is, St. Paul) allows even a second marriage, saying 'only in the Lord'. Now what means 'in the Lord'? With chastity, with honor."²⁵

Elsewhere, in his homilies, he says: "Let women listen to this (for it is on their account especially that I refer to the departed) who enter into a second marriage, and defile the bed of their deceased husband, though they have loved him. Not that I forbid a second marriage or pronounce it a proof of wantonness, for Paul does not allow me, stopping my mouth by saying to women, 'If she marry she hath not sinned' (1 Cor. 7:28 & 40)."²⁶

On second marriage in general, St. John Chrysostom says: "But what will they say, who are knit together in second marriages? I speak not at all in condemnation of them, God forbid; for the Apostle himself permits them, though indeed by way of condescension."²⁷

The code of Orthodox canon law at first did not recognize second marriages and, in fact, did not approve of them. The seventh canon of the Council of Neocaesarea (315) states: "No presbyter is permitted to dine at the wedding of persons marrying a second time. For, if the plight of a digamist is one demanding repentance, what will be that of a presbyter who is lending his consent to the wedding by attending it?" Ultimately, however, the Church had to come to terms with second marriages since they were permitted by the civil law. But the Church's participation for a long time was expressed as a usual reaction to a breach of church law – namely, the imposition of an *epitimia*. When second marriages were finally accepted, this did not imply a change in the Church's teaching, but only was a consequence of the civil order; in other words, the Church was constrained by the state to admit them, and this she did by economy. According to St. Theodore Studite, this occurred in the reign of Constantine the iconoclast (741-775) because, before him, there were no such second marriages. St. Theodore Studite is the first to classify them as an economy: "In the Christian Church, second marriage is not a law, but a condescension."²⁸ Apart from Constantinople, other local churches did not allow this until the thirteenth century.

At the present time, therefore, second marriage, permitted as an economy, is performed in an abbreviated, penitential ceremony noticeably

different from the usual marriage rite. There are prayers asking for “forgiveness of transgressions”, for “purification”, and for “pardon”. Three marriages are considered an appropriate limit to man’s weakness, formally recognized by the Church.

The law of the Gospel is that marriage, once legally contracted, is indissoluble. It is stated in both St. Mark and St. Luke as follows: “Whoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: (Mark 10:11, Luke 16:18). St. Matthew has it slightly different: “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery” (Matt. 19:9). All these evangelists assert the strict rule — husband and wife are one flesh and cannot be divided. The bond is as close as between Christ and the Church. A second marriage, they all assert, is adultery. However, as I have already said, the civil law recognizes second marriages, and the Church was faced with the manifestation of man’s weakness. In this context, it is interesting that St. Matthew quotes our Lord as allowing an exception to divorce if there has been “fornication”. Further, St. Paul himself allows separation (divorce, if you prefer, but not remarriage) for unbelief: “If the unbelieving [spouse] depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases” (1 Cor. 7:15). Now we have another exception. Next, if we look at the canons of St. Basil the Great (330-379), we see that he allows another exception, in the case of a wife’s desertion, the innocent husband may remarry (canon 35). We already have three grounds for divorce! The extremely authoritative basis for these exceptions or reasons for divorce cannot but have laid the ground for the later acceptance of others.

It is interesting, by the way, that in his commentary on our Lord’s words that “Whoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery” (Luke 16:18). Tertullian states: “Since, therefore, His prohibition of divorce was a conditional one [that is, a divorce is prohibited if it is for a reason ‘wherefore a woman ought not to be dismissed’], He did not prohibit absolutely; and what He did not absolutely forbid, that He

permitted on some occasions, when there is an absence of the cause why He have His prohibition.”²⁹ In other words, it seems, Tertullian would allow divorce if not for an “unlawful” reason.

In his commentary on St. Paul’s text, St. John Chrysostom says: “Since there are cases of separation for continence, or for other reasons, or for ‘infirmities of temper’, and then he goes on to exhort the wife to stay with her husband. The point is that this commentary shows the matter-of-fact attitude that existed then (fourth century) to marital separation.”³⁰ Further, St. John Chrysostom adds, “if the unbelieving husband directs you to bring sacrifices and participate in his ungodliness, by force of the marriage, or else depart, it is better to give up the marriage.”³¹ (In Eerdmans Series translation, “it were better the marriage were annulled”). Further, he writes, “if the unbelieving one daily insults you and causes arguments, it is best to separate.”

This commentary is a clear recognition of the fact that some marriages do not work out. The answer is to separate. But nowhere do the Scriptures or fathers advocate the contracting of a second marriage. The operative word is “separate” — although the spouses remained married, the only solution was to separate. Then, however, deprived of the restraints of marital cohabitation, man’s weakness prevailed, and, in most cases, he wished to remarry.

In view of all this, therefore, it is easy to understand the mentality of the Church in allowing divorce and remarriage in practice whilst still teaching the ideal of marital fidelity and eternal union. The Scriptures and fathers recognize that some marriages will fail, and they even advocate separation. Since the civil law permitted divorce and remarriage, it was a short step for the Church, out of love for her children, to regularize that second union as a condescension (economy).

It is instructive to read the comments of those who participated in the Pre-Council (Russian Church Council of 1917-18) Commission when they discussed the establishing of the grounds for divorce, and to see what, in their minds, the important factors were in allowing this or that ground.

They acknowledged that since “marriage is the full unity of the spouses”, the grounds for divorce could only be those that, as a result of their existence, made it impossible for the spouses to realize the aim of the marriage to the same extent as when adultery had occurred. It is clear, they admitted, that adultery destroyed the sacramental sanctity of the marital union, but marriage is not just a religious rite, but a relationship giving rise to moral, juridical, social, governmental, natural, and economical factors. The mutual rights and duties of the spouses, therefore, had to be considered when establishing a reason for divorce.

These factors were particularly significant when they looked at incurable insanity. This was specifically discounted as a reason for divorce by canon 15 of Timothy of Alexandria. Yet, the participants in the Pre-Council Commission were moved, out of compassionate considerations, to allow it, and it remains to this day as a ground for divorce. The members of the Commission said: “Insanity signifies mental, and therefore civil, death if it is incurable. It causes more tragedy than natural death. Insanity so changes a person’s personality that everything human in him dies. In a moral sense, an insane spouse, usually being unaware of his condition or surroundings, undergoes no loss if the other spouse remarries. Mental illness is tantamount to spiritual death, removing not only the physical, but also the moral, basis of the marriage.”³²

(I should add, incidentally, that before being made a separate ground, it was often cited in actions brought on the basis of incapacity for marital cohabitation.)

Syphilis, leprosy, and other infectious diseases were considered grounds for divorce “if they deprive spouses of all possibility of conjugal cohabitation or if they create a danger of infection of the offspring”.³³

It is even more interesting to look at how the canon law textbook writers justify divorce.

In his book, *Orthodox Church Law*, (St. Petersburg, 1897, in Russian), Bishop Nikodim Milash (whom I have already mentioned with regard to his mistaken view of the effect of economy

on the validity of heterodox sacraments) makes the following two points:

1. “It is only possible to dissolve legally the marital bond by death, or for such reason as overcomes the Church’s concept of indissolubility; and which destroys its moral or religious basis; and in itself represents the same death, but in another form. Thus, only death, physical, moral, or religious, may dissolve the marital union.”³⁴

2. “The dissolution of marriage is not an act recognized by the Church’s law-making authority, but it is in itself the consequence of the destruction of the marital union. For, as between the spouses, the very basis of the marriage and the aim of the marital union cannot be achieved – there is no marriage.

Therefore, the Church authority does not dissolve the marriage, but only juridically testifies to the sad fact that a legal marriage has been deprived of its basis and consequently is dissolved by God Himself.”³⁵

This second point is akin to the Roman Church’s concept of annulment where, usually by some canonical fiction, the marriage is said never to have existed and is therefore declared annulled. On this reasoning, because of some legalistic and basic fault, God Himself recognizes that no marriage exists, and the Church officially testifies to this fact (that is, grants a divorce).

The same point, however, is taken up by others and expressed in less scholastic and legalistic terms. Thus, Protopriest V. Pevtsov in his book, *Lectures on Church Law* (St. Petersburg 1914), states: “Only as an exception to the general rule, the words of Christ allow divorce for such a reason as infringes the sanctity of the marital union and destroys its very basis” (page 192).

These writers (as well as the author of *Notes on Church Law*, Kiev, 1871) all emphasize that the Church’s recognition of various grounds for divorce was a reaction to the Roman custom, enshrined in the civil law, of allowing divorce at will and by common consent.

The strict teaching of the Church is that marriage, once lawfully contracted, is indissoluble. However, as even the Church fathers recognize,

some marriages will fail for one reason or another, and man, being weak and hardhearted, will want to embark upon another relationship. At this point the doctrine of economy is invoked in practice in order to allow the possibility of that second relationship and to facilitate man's salvation, for without economy in this case, man would be liable to condemnation as an adulterer. The Church provides for such an arrangement (but nevertheless subjects the parties to penance) out of love and to mitigate the harshness and terrible consequences of the strict rule. Though it is a condescension to man's weakness, still the church, as a loving mother, does not close her eyes to her children's weaknesses and provides an alternative, while teaching the ideal of perfection, just as did our Lord.

It seems to me, however, that the doctrine of economy becomes relevant at the point when a person wishes to dissolve his existing union in order to contract another. People do not, usually, seek to obtain a church divorce merely for the sake of it but to be free so as to marry another. Divorce and second marriage, therefore, are closely bound, and the economy of divorce is allowed for the sake of a second marriage, which is in itself an economy.

Divorce cannot be allowed on whim (as it is in the civil law today and is obviously the cause of the gradual breakdown of society and its moral decay). Since divorce was not absolutely forbidden by our Lord, and second marriage was allowed on the death of one of the spouses, then the Church gave her blessing to reasons such as adultery or physical death. Reasons that violated the sanctity of the marriage bond or that destroyed its moral or religious basis and, thus, effectively prevented the spouses from achieving the aim of the marriage.

3. EPISCOPAL CELIBACY

I wish, finally, to attempt to respond to a remarkable article that appeared recently in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* (Vol. 29, #1, Spring 1984), entitled *Married Bishops* (Agreement between Sacred Scripture and Holy Canons) by Panagiotēs I. Boumes, a lecturer in the School

of Theology, University of Athens. It is remarkable because the author has to perform amazing contortions to substantiate his arguments.

Ostensibly, the author's object in his brief article is to reconcile what he sees as the apparent contradiction between holy Scripture – "A bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:5-7) – and the twelfth canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council. This prescribes that bishops should not live with their wives after their consecration; in other words, bishops should not be married. "We assert this, however, not with any intention of setting aside or overthrowing any legislation laid down apostolically, but having due regard for the salvation and safety of peoples and for their better advancement with a view to avoiding any likelihood of giving anyone cause to blame the 'priestly polity'" (*The Rudder*, p. 303).

The author's main point is that the twelfth canon, prescribing episcopal celibacy, is a canon of economy, as opposed to the strict rule, laid down in the Epistles of St. Paul, that bishops should and must be married!

He tries to establish this point by bringing forward arguments against it:

1. How can the twelfth canon prescribing episcopal celibacy be a rule of economy if it is stricter than the so-called strict rule that bishops be married?
2. How can the twelfth canon prescribing episcopal celibacy be a rule of economy if the great canonists – Balsamon, Zonaras – allowed married bishops as an economy?
3. How can the twelfth canon prescribing episcopal celibacy be a rule of economy if a rule of economy is only temporary, and the twelfth canon seems to be permanent?

Apart from these contrary arguments which he hardly discusses, and if he does, he lamely dismisses, he brings forward two additional truly amazing arguments:

1. The Lord and apostles allowed the marriage of bishops; thus, it is a strict rule that bishops must be married; and
2. The 30th canon of the same Sixth Ecumenical Council says that, as an economy, married

priests living in barbarian lands may separate from their wives by agreement to strive after sobriety and virginity. As this was permitted by economy (contrary to the fifth apostolic canon), by analogy, the author maintains the rule in the twelfth canon that bishops separate from their wives is also an economy.

In his first epistle to Timothy, St. Paul says, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife..." (1 Tim. 3:2). He repeats this in his epistle to Titus (Titus 1:6).

St John Chrysostom explains: "What is said here about the marriage of bishops does not related to other times, for a bishop is embellished by complete purity and holiness. But among the Jews and Gentiles, who were committed to self-indulgence, to have only one wife was considered a great thing. Therefore, the Apostle does not make it a law, but shows condescension to people's understanding at that time."³⁶

In the first centuries of Christianity, as St. John Chrysostom expressly acknowledges, it was not the law that a bishop were married, but it was a practice observed by some. The majority of bishops were not married.³⁷

The great, Russian canonist, theologian, and preacher, Bishop John of Smolensk, in his book *The Monasticism of Bishops*,³⁸ makes out a complete case supporting the concept of episcopal celibacy. In respect of St. Paul's words, Bishop John says that in fact, St. Paul was addressing himself to priests, not bishops, because in speaking of the duties of the clergy, he mentions bishops and then passes to deacons, omitting priests. In Apostolic times, Bishop John says, the title "bishop" also applied to priests.

Be that as it may, it was a church tradition, not carried into law until the Sixth Ecumenical Council but preserved in church life, that bishops be celibate. Clement of Rome (first century) said, "It is good for a bishop to be unmarried; if he is not, at least he should be married only once."³⁹

Until the Sixth Ecumenical Council laid down the rule of celibacy, there was an attitude in the Church directed at that aim. This attitude had its origin in the spirit of the Gospel that tried to turn

man away from the world and the flesh and direct him to the spirit, to God. Therefore, pastors, as preachers of the Gospel and the representatives of Christianity, most of all had to embody this spirit.

The Church is represented in scripture as the bride of Christ, a holy and chaste virgin in a mystical union with Christ, and this union with Him is presented in the image of the marital bond (Eph. 1:5). So the bishop, as the highest pastor of the Church and the image of Christ, is represented in Church teaching as the guardian of her spiritual virginity, that is, inner purity in faith, life, and in all her activity in the world. So he is betrothed to her, as the apostle Paul speaks of himself in relation to the Corinthian church (2 Cor. 11:2). This bond of the bishop must be exclusive and single. Thus, a church (or group of the faithful) that is left without a bishop is called "widowed". This was so strictly understood in the ancient church that the occupation of two sees was called bigamy, and unlawful occupation by a bishop of another's see was considered adultery.

Thus, a bishop should be unmarried and celibate in the sense of complete moral renunciation of fleshly and worldly ties. Then, his union with the Church (and his diocese) will be completely pure, spiritual and independent of the flesh and world, as is proper for a bridegroom of the Church.⁴⁰

This attitude of the Church, therefore, was given formal definition in the canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, and this rule, without doubt, is a strict rule for all time in the absence of another ecumenical council.

In his commentary on this canon, Bishop Nikodom Milash writes:

"The rise of monasticism [in the third century] which had given the church many great bishops on one hand, on the other hand gave a lofty understanding of bodily abstinence and a consciousness that inasmuch as the hierarchical rank is the highest in the church, then there is the least right to bodily indulgence and all the more must it be directed to total service of God and Church in body and soul – all this contributed to the fact that, already in the fourth century, unmarried

bishops were regarded as naturally basic to church order and that it was essential, sooner or later, that it become the law."⁴¹

Further, he says,

"In 390, a council was held at Carthage and the second canon of this council prescribed that a bishop must be unmarried and preserve his virginity, with respect to which, the fathers of this council, in order to have a basis for their decree, refer to the apostolic tradition preserved by the Church from ancient times."

"This and other testimonies show how deeply rooted was the practice of appointing only unmarried persons as bishops. They also show us that the majority of bishops came from the monks, and that these bishops from the monks were the greatest luminaries of the Church."⁴²

In view of this ancient and weighty authority, it staggers the mind to read in the pages of *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* that this rule was a mere economy and, therefore, being an economy, exactness (that is, married bishops) may be restored without an ecumenical council. But it is obvious at the very beginning of his article what motives have produced such alien ideas. The author states in his second paragraph: "I was encouraged by revered ecclesiastical personalities to present this paper." Then, in a footnote to his very next paragraph, he writes:

"The usefulness of the present study can be clearly understood from what was stated at the Pan-Orthodox Conference in Constantinople, 1923. In relation to our topic, Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios Metaxakes proposed the following: "I am of the opinion that... promoting married priests to the office of bishop, without compelling them to send their wives to a monastery, is a proper goal and is urgent and rational at this time'."⁴³

CONCLUSION

The three areas that I have examined in relation to the application of economy show the usefulness of this doctrine, but two of them especially also show the dangers inherent in it when misinterpreted and misapplied. Economy is a doctrine of compassion and is available to be used for man's

benefit, and ultimately, his salvation. Consequently, it cannot be used frivolously. One often hears it invoked in cases of personal weakness, for example, to justify one's breaking the fast, but this is an abuse and a misconception. Every dispensation from the rule of the Church is not an economy, especially when used to excuse one's own weakness.

St. Cyril of Alexandria said that the peace and general good of the Church are the only legitimate grounds for the use of economy.⁴⁴ He compares economy to a ship at sea which is in danger when a storm blows up and some things have to be thrown overboard in order to save the people on board. It is, in effect, the sacrifice of something (in this case, strictness) for the greater good, which is man's salvation.

St. Theodore the Studite is of the same mind as St. Cyril. He says economy is a derogation of the general rule of law which reestablishes its strictness once the situation has returned to normal.⁴⁵ He distinguishes two types of economy; temporary, for example, the reception of converts by confession and communion, and permanent, like the permitting of second marriage. As Nicholas the Mystic, Patriarch of Constantinople expressed it, its aim is to deliver from sin and not to cause its commission.⁴⁶ Strictness is the rule of law, and economy is the practice of love.

With regard to the last case I looked at, episcopal celibacy, it is manifestly obvious that the proponent of this so-called economy was falsely creating a situation of economy to serve his own purposes. His purpose was to advocate a married episcopate, but the doctrine of economy failed him here, not only on historical grounds. "Economy exists when, by necessity or for the greatest benefit of some or of the whole Church, a deviation from strictness is allowed, on certain conditions, temporarily or permanently, as much as to ensure that piety and the purity of dogma remain unaltered."⁴⁷

It is clear that the whole of Church tradition favored an unmarried episcopate. Economy, therefore, cannot be invoked to change the Church's belief or to alter her piety.

What, then, can our conclusion be as to the nature of economy? Essentially, it is the overflowing of God's love, expressed through the Church, to cover man's imperfection. It is God's "providential management" of man's affairs, when he falls short of the ideal.

The doctrine of economy is flexible but not frivolous. It has social and salvific significance

rather than juridical. Strictly, it is not "dispensation" as practiced in the Roman Church, for it takes no account of legalities. Its motivating factor is the good of souls, a human element, and this also is its purpose, to ensure dissimulation.⁴⁸ but, in fact, it is merely evidence that "the ways of God are inscrutable".⁴⁹ Our limited human reason bears no relation to God's limitless love.

FOOTNOTES

1. Kontakion 9.
2. *The Life in Christ*, by Nicholas Cabasilas, St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1974, p. 106.
3. St. John of Damascus, "Contra Jacobitas" in *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, by Vladimir Lossky, James Clarke & Co., Ltd., Cambridge and London, 1957, p. 138.
4. Idem, p. 144: St. Cyril of Alexandria.
5. Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, Eerdmans Series, Volume XI, p. 155.
6. Bishop Nikodim Milash, quoted in *Strictness and Economy*, by Protopresbyter George Grabbe (now Bishop Gregory), *Orthodox Life*, #2, 1979, p. 36.
7. See also the first canon of St. Basil the Great.
8. "Why Anglican Clergy could be Received in their Orders", by Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky, *The Christian East*, Volume VIII, 1927, pp. 60-69, reprinted in *Orthodox Life*, #4, 1980, p. 29.
9. Volume IV, No. 1, p. 63.
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11. *The Unity of the Church and the World Conference of Christian Communities*, by Archbishop Ilarion, Montreal, 1975, p. 69.
12. *Russia and the English Church*, by W. Birbeck, London, 1895, p. 158.
13. *The Relations of the Anglican Churches with the Eastern Orthodox*, by Rev. J. Douglas, London, 1921, p. 58.
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15. Eustratios Argenti, Eastern Orthodox Books, 1974, p. 84.
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17. "The Orthodox Principle of Economy and its Exercise" by J. A. Douglas in *The Christian East*, Volume XIII, London, 1932, p. 103.
18. Op. Cit. p. 26.
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20. ?
21. "Supplication for the Christians" in *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, by W. Jurgens, Volume I, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1970, p. 71.
22. Idem, p. 158.
23. Ante Nicene Fathers, op. cit. On Monogamy, pp. 59-72.
24. Jurgens, op. cit., p. 52.
25. Eerdmans Series, op. cit., Volume XII, p. 111.
26. Idem, Volume XIII. Homily VII on 2 Tim. 3:1-7, p. 503.
27. Idem, Homily XX on Eph. 5:22-24, p. 148.
28. ?
29. Eerdmans Series, op. cit., Volume III, Against Marcion, p. 405.
30. Eerdmans Series, op. cit., Volume XII, p. 106. In Russian, Volume 10, p. 180.
31. Russian Edition, Volume 10, p. 182; Eerdmans Series, op. cit., p. 108.
32. ?
33. Idem.
34. ?
35. Idem, CTP. 635.
36. ?
37. Idem, p. 5.
38. Op. cit.
39. Idem, p. 9.
40. Idem, p. 63.
41. Op. cit., p. 462.
42. Idem, p. 464.
43. Op. cit., p. 82.
44. *L'économie dans le droit byzantin*, par Mgr Pierre Rai, Orient et Occident, Istina 3 (1973), p. 266.
45. Idem, p. 274.
46. Idem, p. 279.
47. Idem, p. 369.
48. *Russia and the English Church*, op. cit., p. 149.
49. Idem, p. 159.

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